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THE BANNER

[WEEKLY.]

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(FOR THE BANNER.)

Mr. Editor:—You will oblige a subscriber, if you will publish in your paper, the inclosed communication from the "*Southern Post*, Macon Ga., Feb'y 23d 1839.

The incidents related, are strictly true; but they occurred at different times and at different camps.

The officer of the guard, (called Lieut. CALHART,) I know to be Capt. WM. M. CALHOUN of our District. He was the late popular commander of that fine volunteer company, the *Abbeville Artillery*, which dates its existence prior to the war of 1812. Capt. CALHOUN in the Seminole war, was a Lieutenant in Capt. PARKER's company. T.

THE OFFICER OF THE GUARD.

The sun had already sunk in the west, amid the gorgeous coloring of a southern horizon, and the last streaks of day begining to disappear, when a company of men might have been seen wending their way, in silence through the trackless wilds of Florida. They might perhaps have numbered a hundred, but their haggard looks and uneasy pace, showed that they had been wearied by a long and toilsome march. They carried their knapsacks loosely slung over their shoulders, and their sunburnt countanances gradually assumed an air of settled despondency, as they looked around upon the savage wilderness on either side, now rendered more gloomy by the sombre shades of twilight, and thought that here they must pass a restless night, and perhaps find a bloody grave. It is perhaps a principle in our nature, that we should couple darkness with terror, and that the existence of the one should frequently be productive of the other. But there were circumstances connected with their situation, still more calculated to produce despondency, if not to cause terror. They were in the heart of the Indian territory, and surrounded by objects dear to the Indian's heart. They were invading the most secret and sacred haunts of the red man, and were perhaps, even now, treading upon the consecrated mounds, that contained the revered ashes of his ancestors. For these they knew he would contend, until his pulse should cease to throb, and his heart to beat. Here, perhaps, in the days of their glory, they had gathered around the council fire of their chiefs, and as they pass the sacred calumet, listened to the deeds of daring recounted by their venerable heroes. And after having been driven from post to post, and forced to abandon the most desirable portion of their territory, it was thought they would, here, amidst the relics of their former greatness, and in the very theatre of their glory, make an effort, the more to be dreaded, as it was an effort of despair. Such were the thoughts, coupled with the circumstances of time and place, that infused despondency into the hearts of those, in other circumstances, daring soldiers.

Meantime, they had gained a portion of the forest more elevated than that immediately around it, but by so gradual an ascent, as scarcely to be perceivable. This place was chosen for a camp, and preparations were accordingly made for passing the night as comfortable as possible. The ground, as is usual in that portion of the country, was covered with long grass, which served the double purpose, of beds for the soldiers, and provender for the horses; while, at small distances, were huge pines, the growth of ages, whose clustering tops towered towards heaven, and formed a canopy which partially warded off the dews of night.

The sentinels had been posted, the fires kindled, and the preparations for supper commenced; and under the influence of rest and comfort, cheerfulness had again resumed her sway, and the merry joke began to circulate, when, as if by magic, a blaze of light streamed from the top of the tallest tree, at about the distance of a quarter of a mile off—another soon appeared in the opposite direction, and then another, and another, until in every direction around the camp, the awful signals of destruction flashed upon the devoted band. And then, to render their situation more appalling, the terrible war-whoop of the savage sounded shrill and clear in the stillness of the night, and ere the echo died away, it was taken up, and prolonged by another, and another, until the very trees seemed gifted with utterance, to peal the signal notes of death.

At the sight of the first signal light, the drum beat to arms, and the soldiers hurried to their appropriate places, in the utmost consternation. Many a cheek was blanched then, that never bl nched before, and "the chilled blood d slowly back to its fountain," in m bosom that never before had bee fear.

There is something peculiarly startling and terrible in the Indian war-whoop at any time, but here every circumstance conspired to render it more so. The wild and rugged character of the scenery, now rendered more strikingly uncouth by the unsteady flicker of the camp fires which threw their pale and ghostly light upon the huge trunks of the aged pines, which rose in spectre-like grandeur around—the insignia of the Indian's birthright—while far in the distance, flashed those dreadful lights, which betokened the Indian's revenge, and around were lurking the crafty and daring foes of the white men.

It was a moment of awful suspense; the men grasped their arms more tightly, and drew their breath hard, as if they expected each one would be the last. The sentinels, meanwhile, retained their posts, although they were raw militia, who had never before known the duties, or the dangers of warfare—a striking illustration of the influence that a sense of duty exerts upon the mind of man.

Scarcely, however, had the last receding echoes of the war-whoop died away in the distance, before the clear notes of the commander were heard—he seemed in the general consternation, to partake of his full share, and addressed the sentinels, who needed other encouragement, with, "Look out there, you d——d rascals, or you will all be in hell in less than ten minutes; the Indians will have them scalps of yours, before you know what you are about."

Then turning about, he bawled out, "where's Lieut. Calhart?"

"He's officer of the guard, tonight," said a soldier near him.

"D——n it, I know that," said the choleric Major.

"Where is he?"

"Yonder he stands."

The Major now approached a young man of a tall and manly form, graceful figure and Martial appearance, who was standing at the left of his company, with his right hand resting on his sword hilt, and the other hanging listlessly at his side. He seemed rather a spectator of the scenes enacting around him, than an actor in them, for he did not manifest any of the anxiety depicted on the countenances of his commanders.

"Well, Lieutenant," said his commander, bustling up to him, "I'm afraid we'll all be in h—ll in less than ten minutes."

"Very likely," was the laconic answer.

"Now, I want you to take four men, and patrol all round the camp, and see where the Indians are."

The Lieutenant started at so novel and dangerous a command, but said nothing—his captain interposed.

"Major, that is a strange order; it will do no good, and only risk the men's lives to no purpose—for if the Sentinels don't kill them, the Indians will."

"I'll go Captain," said the Lieutenant. "I came here to do my duty and I'll do it."

It was with some difficulty he could induce the men to accompany him, but the example of a brave man has more influence than the greatest hopes of reward, in such an enterprise as this; and the example was not wanting in the present instance. Besides, there was not so much danger in obeying this command, as might at first be imagined. The sentries would be afraid to hail at so great a distance from the camp, lest they should discover their whereabout, and thus set themselves up as a mark for the bullet's of the Indians. And, on the other hand, the Indians, who probably did not number over a dozen, were most likely at a great distance from the camp. But as we have to do only with the Lieutenant's adventures, as officer of the guard that night, we will merely say, they returned in safety, without seeing an Indian.

After his return, having visited all the posts, the Lieutenant was sitting by the camp fire, with his face burried in his hands, and his elbows resting on his knees, when he heard the following conversation carried on in an under tone, by two soldiers, at a little distance from him.

"Joe, you heard what a confounded rule they made about the sentinels, to-day?"

"No, I aint; what is it?"

"Why, they passed a rule, that every sentinel they catch asleep, on duty, shall be shot; because they say we are in the *proximity*, (or some such word as that) of the enemy. You have to go out next time, don't you?"

"Yes—but I'm not going to sleep."

"Well—you see that man yonder, sitting on the log? He's officer of the guard to-night, and if you don't look out, he'll take your gun from you, while you are wide awake, just to show you how easy an Indian could have done it."

There was a pause of some moments, during which the person addressed, took a deliberate survey of the Lieutenant, and then said, in a drawlling manner, that he intended should be emphatic:

"I'll be confluderated if he gets my gun, Bill!"

The Lieutenant said nothing, but rose to revisit the post again previous to the sentries being relieved. He found all in order, until he had proceeded about half round, when approaching one of the sentries who was stationed by a large tree, he saw, by the motions of his head, that he was, what is generally termed, "nodding." He was seated with his arms, near the elbow resting on his knees; and his gun, which had fallen from his hands, was leaning against his shoulder, with the butt on the ground, between his feet. The Lieutenant approached him softly, and placing himself behind the tree, at his back, took the gun gently by the barrel, and had almost drawn it from him, when the lock, catching by some part of his clothing, awakened him. Suddenly jumping up, he seized his gun, and exclaimed—

"I'll be d—d if I was asleep. I was *not* asleep."

"How dare you then, sir," said the officer, sternly, "let me approach you in this manner, without hailing if you were not asleep?"

"Well, officer—to tell the truth—I was asleep; but you know we have had a tiresome march to-day, and I could not help it."

"I have marched with my company all day, and have not had the opportunities of rest you enjoyed."

"I was overcome, against my inclination, this time, officer. I hope you will not report me!"

"I must do my duty, sir," said the officer, sternly, as he turned to pursue his rounds.

The sentinel resumed his station, with the feelings of a man who knows he has to meet some fearful destiny, which he cannot avoid, and yet has some faint hope that he may escape The felon's death stared him in the face, and for the simple fault of yielding, when he could no longer resist, to the calls of nature. Nothing tends more to take away that firmness of character which belongs to man, and to destroy his self-possession than a state of suspense. The criminal, condemned to die, when there is no hope of pardon, may look with calmness upon his approaching end; because there being no alternative, he can summon all his energies to aid in the only struggle, and bring his whole mind to bear upon one particular point. But only give him a hope of escape, and you divide the mind—it wavers between the desire of life and the fear of death—there is a conflict in himself, and as the two feelings must be equal, and opposed to each other—each claims an equal share of the mind, and prevents its acting as a whole, which naturally destroys the force of action, in whatever manner directed. Such were the feelings of the sentinel. But let us follow the officer.

He next approached a sentinel, who either, from ignorance or design, could not be pursuaded to do his duty prop ly. He hailed—

"Who comes ther?"

"Officer of the Guard."

"Well, stand."

"What comes next?" said the officer, after he had remained standing some few moments—"I hope you'll not keep me standing here all night."

"Give the countersign."

"Not here—the Indians out there will hear it as well as you."

"Well—you may come a *little* closer. There—stand—give the countersign."

"I'll give in your name in the morning, for wilful disobedience of orders," said the officer, loosing patience, "if you do not perform your duty as you should."

This treat was sufficient—for fearing the effects of the Lieutenant's anger, he said, respectfully—

"Advance, officer, and give the countersign."

In the meantime, the relief had gone out, and the post he yet had to visit, were occupied by the new set—approaching one, the sentinel, instead of hailing, embraced his gun closely, and turning his back to the officer, exclaimed—

"I'll be d—d if you get my gun, mister."

"Stop, you gump," said the officer, "and do your duty—I don't want your gun."

The soldier stopped, and looking back, without turning his body, said—

"Well."

"Ask, who comes there?"

"There's no use in asking that—I know."

"Ask it, sir; whether you know or not."

"Who comes there?"

"Officer of the guard. Go on."

"The soldier, either not understanding, or not wishing to understand, walked off.

"Stop, sir," said the officer; "ask the next."

"What is it?"

"Advance and give the countersign."

"You are close enough now, to give it."

The officer sprang towards him, and seizing him by the collar, gave him a hearty shake, and then worked upon his fears so successfully, by threats, that he went through the formula half a dozen times, from the Lieutenant's dictation; and swore, by his hopes of happiness hereafter, he never would trifle with an officer again.

The labors of the night were ended, and the officer was lying in his tent, in vain courting the drowsy God, when a voice near him, in an under tone, said—

"Officer?"

"Who is there?" said the Lieutenant, striving, in the dark, to distinguish the outlines of the speaker.

"The sentinel you found asleep to night. Have you returned me?"

"Not yet."

"Officer, you did me injustice; I did not deserve such harsh treatment Though I violated the law, I do not deserve the penalty. Sleep overcame me, and I could not avoid it. I had overtaxed my powers, and they relaxed their tension when I most needed their aid. And though I do not fear death, when I can meet it as a man and a gentleman, I cannot help shrinking from being set up as a mark, for the bullets of my countrymen, and for so small an offence."

"My dear fellow," said the Lieutenant, "you need be under no apprehensions; you will not be reported. I thought it best to leave you in suspense, to prevent a repetition of the offence; but I will not inflict unmerited punishment upon a fellow soldier."

The stranger threw his arms around the Lieutenant, and burst into tears. They did not disgrace his manhood, but were the pledges of his gratitude. He received life from the hands of a stranger—tears were but a poor reward. He could only say, "God bless you, officer," and rushed from the tent. The Lieutenant soon went to sleep, with the conviction that "Mercy confers a double blessing—it blesses him that gives, and him that receives." C.

Greensboro', Ga.

The following incident is related in a respectable village newspaper, "out west," of course:

A gentleman travelling on an unfrequented obscure road, and passing a solitary shanty, or shingle-shop, his attention was arrested by a loud outcry of, "Hallo there! I say! Murder! fire! tongs! gridirons! and brimstone! Hallo-oah!" and a man came rushing forth in great haste, wearing a leathern apron, but without his coat, and, approaching the traveller.

"What is the matter? what's the matter?" inquired the traveller, whose sympathy was evidently aroused.

"O!" shrieked the settler, with agony depicted on his countenance: "*I'm out'n'terbacker*—got any 'bout ye?"

GREEN SASS' DAINKS.—A Hoosier stopped opposite one of our fashionable drinking saloons a day or two since, and with his hands deep in his breeches pockets and the front of his chip turned up, seemed looking with absorbed interest into the interior, at an individual luxuriating on a julep with straw accompaniments.

"Well I'll swar, if that ain't a new kick," says he. "Who'd a thort of sich a thing as a green sass' drink? How consarned cool that ar feller sucks it," soliloquized he, moving his body in a sympathetic manner as if engaged in drawing the fluid himself. "I'll hev a taste of that mixtur ef I bust a bit," was his conclusion; so in he went.

"Whut will you take sir?" inquired the bar-keeper.

"Jest go on and give that feller his licker, caus, I aint half as dry as he looks," said the Hoosier, pointing to a customer at the other end of the counter.

"Now, !" said the attentive attendant.

The Hoosier reached across the counter, took hold of his collar, and drawing him close up, whispered in his ear:

"A green sass' drink with all the fixins!" and he winked his eye familiarly, as if to convey his meaning more fully that all the ingredients should be thar.

"Yes, sir," said the bar keeper.

The mint was fixed in, the ice beside it, the sugar piled on top, and the fluid delicately poured over all; the whole was then commingled, and with the accompanying straw ornament handed to the customer. He pulled his hands out of his pockets, picked up the glass, and commenced, first a suck and then a guffaw, which exercise he continued until the straw squealed with emptiness, whereupon, setting it down, he pulled out his bit, and repeated the operation of whispering to the bar-keeper, told him secretly:

"Iv'e seed through them ar green sass' drinks; they' pooty good, all kcept the ice, and I reckon thur cold enough 'thout that; but, stranger, that fodder stuff is an amazin' cute idee for the temperance folks; it's put in I speculate, *to hide the licker!*"

BLUSHING.—We love to see the rosy hue mounting over the neck and face of a beautiful woman, it shadows forth, delicately and softly the gentle feeling of her soul. It is the evidence of timidity which is lovely in woman. Out upon your masculine mind—out upon your rough, sturdy genius; we prefer the red to ash—ivy to oak. Woman's natural element is retirement; her home the domestic circle. Unfit by nature to buffet with the world's waves, or mingle in its strife, she lives independent upon a strong spirit, and repays in kindness and gentleness that which she receives in protection and support.

We cannot bear a woman who never blushes; the steady, cold, calm eye, has no charm for us, there is a beauty and a gentleness in the downcast look, a stealing tear, and warm blush, that defies comparison, even with the loveliest of the haughty. Those who endeavor to curb and restrain this feeling, thinking it a weakness, err strangely in their ideas. Let it alone there is no deformity in the indulgence.

SELF CONTROL.—**Let not any one say he cannot govern his passions, nor hinder him from breaking out and carying into action; for, what he can do before a prince or a great man, he can do alone, or in the presence of God if he will.**